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March 5, 2004

[Fire Chief, Fire Commission Chairperson, and EMS Director of Operations]  
Address  
Address

Dear [Chief, Chair, Director of Operations] [Name]:

Monroe County is striving to conform to Federal Communications Commission (FCC) mandate to “narrow band” all VHF-High radio frequencies. This mandate was established a number of years ago by FCC and is the main driving force for our change to “narrow band”.

Monroe County is committed to becoming “narrow band” compliant for all fire and EMS radio frequencies by January 2006. The Fire/EMS Communications Board recently supported this date at the December 18, 2003 meeting.

I am formally sharing this information and would request that you consider the following impact(s) on your agency:

**First**, voice paging will no longer be utilized after January 2006, as the County is unaware of any commercial vendor that manufactures and/or distributes “narrow band” compliant voice pagers. Though the industry will continue to be monitored for availability in the future, we anticipate an 18-month overlap of digital and voice paging during transition.

**Second**, given the notification of this impending transition several years ago, agencies were advised to purchase “narrow band” compliant communications equipment. It is imperative that agencies assess their existing equipment for conformance and, if needed, plan for replacement as soon as possible. If you have any question as to whether your equipment is narrow band compliant contact Radio Center at 428-5146. Resources (grant funding) may be available to your agency through the federal Fire Act to assist in replacement of communications equipment. Additionally, information on the NYS Low Interest Loan program is available by contacting the Fire Coordinator’s office at 279-4051.

**Finally**, any agency experiencing difficulty meeting the deadline of January 2006 should notify their coordinators and representatives to discuss and/or develop acceptable options.

Item attached for your reference:

- Communications Fact Sheet

Sincerely,

Stephen C. Bowman  
Director, Public Safety

c. Fire Coordinator, Deputy Fire Coordinators

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EMS Coordinator, Deputy EMS Coordinators